

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (currently amended): A device (~~2~~) for processing management data for a communications network (N), representing the use of the resources and/or services within the said network, ~~characterised~~ characterized in that it comprises processing means (~~5~~) arranged so as to determine primary data representing a state of use of the network (~~N~~) by at least one user who has made a service level agreement, or “SLA”, with an operator of the said network, from the said management data, and then to compare the said state of use with ancillary data representing the said SLA, so as to determine an action to be undertaken in the event of the detection of at least one difference between the said primary data and the said ancillary data, the said processing means (~~5~~) being arranged in order to determine the said action to be undertaken amongst an action group comprising a proposal to modify the SLA made between the said user and the said operator and/or a proposal to modify the services and/or resources of the said network (~~N~~), and to adapt at least some of the SLA modification proposals according to the said difference detected.

2. (currently amended): A device according to Claim 1, ~~characterised~~ characterized in that the said primary data represent a use of at least one service and/or of resources.

3. (currently amended): A device according to Claim 1, ~~characterised~~ characterized in that the said processing means (~~5~~) are arranged so as to adapt at least some of the proposals to

modify the services and/or resources of the said network according to at least one SLA modification proposal.

4. (currently amended): A device according to Claim 3, ~~characterised~~characterized in that ~~the~~ said processing means (5) are arranged so as to adapt at least some of the proposals to modify the services and/or resources of the said network according to ~~tertiary~~external data (MD).

5. (currently amended): A device according to Claim 1, ~~characterised~~characterized in that ~~the~~ said processing means (5) are arranged so as to determine at least some of the states of use in the form of a usage profile (SUP) in a chosen time interval, from management data corresponding to ~~the~~ said time interval.

6. (currently amended): A device according to Claim 1, ~~characterised~~characterized in that ~~the~~ said processing means (5) are arranged so as to determine an action to be undertaken from several states of use associated with different users or a state of use associated with a group of users.

7. (currently amended): A device according to Claim 1, ~~characterised~~characterized in that ~~the~~ said processing means (5) are arranged so as to automatically initiate an SLA modification when at least one condition is satisfied.

8. (currently amended): A device according to Claim 7, ~~characterised~~characterized in that ~~the~~ said processing means (5) are arranged so as to automatically initiate ~~the~~ said SLA modification when it is associated with an increase in the tariff of the user less than a penalty representing the violation of the SLA by the user.

9. (currently amended): A device according to Claim 1, ~~characterised~~characterized in that ~~the~~-said processing means (5)-are arranged so as to make their determinations periodically.

10. (currently amended): A device (4)-for managing a communications network (N), ~~characterised~~characterized in that it comprises a processing device (2)-according to claim 1.

11. (currently amended): A method of processing management data for a communications network-(N), representing the use of the resources and/or of the services within ~~the~~-said network, ~~characterised~~characterized in that it consists of determining primary data representing a state of use of the network (N)-by at least one user who has made a service level agreement, or "SLA", with an operator of ~~the~~-said network, from ~~the~~-said management data, and then comparing ~~the~~-said state of use with ancillary data representing ~~the~~-said SLA, so as to determine an action to be undertaken in the event of the detection of at least one difference between ~~the~~-said primary data and ~~the~~-said ancillary data, ~~the~~-said action to be undertaken is determined in an action group comprising a proposal to modify the SLA made between ~~the~~-said user and ~~the~~-said operator and/or a proposal to modify the services and/or resources of ~~the~~-said network-(N), at least some of the SLA modification proposals are adapted according to ~~the~~-said difference detected,

wherein said action to be undertaken is performed by a processing means of a device.

12. (currently amended): A method according to Claim 11, ~~characterised~~characterized in that ~~the~~-said primary data represent a use of at least one service and/or resource or resources.

13. (currently amended): A method according to Claim 11, ~~characterised~~characterized in that at least some of the proposals to modify the services and/or resources of ~~the~~ said network (N) are adapted according to at least one proposal to modify the SLA.

14. (currently amended): A method according to Claim 13, ~~characterised~~characterized in that at least some of the proposals to modify the services and/or resources of ~~the~~-said network are adapted according to ~~tertiary-external~~ data ~~(MD)~~.

15. (currently amended): A method according to Claim 11, ~~characterised~~characterized in that at least some of the states of use are determined in the form of a usage profile (SUP) in a chosen time interval, from management data corresponding to ~~the~~-said time interval.

16. (currently amended): A method according to Claim 11, ~~characterised~~characterized in that some actions to be undertaken are determined from several states of use associated with different users or a state of use associated with a group of users.

17. (currently amended): A method according to Claim 11, ~~characterised~~characterized in that an SLA modification is instituted automatically when at least one condition is satisfied.

18. (currently amended): A method according to Claim 17, ~~characterised~~characterized in that ~~the~~-said SLA modification is instituted when it is associated with an increase in the tariff of the user less than a penalty representing the violation of the SLA by the user.

19. (currently amended): A method according to Claim 11, ~~characterised~~characterized in that the determinations are made periodically.

20. (currently amended): A network ~~Use of the method, processing device (2) and management device (1) according to claim 1 in networks~~ chosen from a group comprising Internet (IP), ATM, Frame Relay, SDH and WDM networks, said network comprising at least said device according to claim 10.